1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

LEVELS OF LIVING

Caste is an important and rigid determinant of division of labour. Under this system several occupations have been preserved as caste monopolies, while some are 'open' and may be adopted by persons belonging to all castes. This system of division of labour by occupation has been examined at some length in Chapter III.

The factors of sex, age and social status govern the division of labour in nearly all types of work in the community. First, 'masculine' and 'feminine' pursuits are clearly distinguished: a woman doing man's work is laughed at; a man undertaking any specifically feminine tasks provides a favourite theme for popular gossip. Household work, agricultural activities, traditional craft or occupation of the family, and socio-religious rites and ceremonies are all marked by division of work on the basis of sex.

The age factor is equally important, but not so rigid. Six basic age divisions are recognized in the society: (i) 'Infant' from birth to weaning. (ii) 'Child' from weaning to about twelve. (iii) 'Grown-up boys or girls' from twelve until marriage or even a year or two later. (iv) 'Grown-up people' from twenty to about thirty-eight. (v) Middle-aged from about thirty-eight to fifty. (vi) 'Aged', over fifty. Each of these age divisions carries with it a more or less recognized status which determines the nature and quantity of work to be done by the individual in question. Only in the lower strata of the community we find the 'child' burdened with a regular share in domestic and occupational tasks. The children in the families on upper levels may occasionally do odd bits of work, but no responsibility is thrust on them. As they grow up, girls have to take an increasing interest in domestic tasks. 'Grown-up boys and girls' must seriously start 'learning to do things', and are gradually entrusted with some responsibility. However, it is on the 'grown-up people' that the main responsibility of 'doing all the work' and running the affairs of the household rests. The 'middle-aged' people continue to do a part of the practical work; but their time is more occupied by planning, direction and supervision. Depending on their age and personality, the 'aged' continue to supervise and direct the work of the younger members. As they grow older they content themselves merely by giving suggestions and eventually retire from active work or its planning, and devote their time mostly to their grandchildren.

Considerations of general social status also determine the nature

LEVELS OF LIVING

883 themselves to work. The major responsibility rests on the adults
[885] and the middle-aged people, and here the social status of the persons concerned will determine the type of work to be done by them.

461 This brings us to social status as a determinant in the division
565 of work in the community. The rich and influential people will not do anything which is regarded as humble or is otherwise classed as menial work. The men on this level generally 'plan and supervise', but the hard manual labour is done by hired labourers. They go to their fields, but only stand in a corner and instruct the servants. They will never be seen taking their plough and the bullocks to the field, or even participating in ploughing or sowing. The popular conception regarding women at this level is 'they sit in their homes loaded with gold and silver, whiling away their time chewing betel leaves and areca nuts.' However, even in these homes, women are never idle, for they have to do the cooking and look after the children. But considerations of respectability prevent them from doing several things which their counterparts in the lower strata of society regard as their normal day-to-day work. They can never be seen going to their fields, carrying headloads, drawing water from public wells, or washing clothes in public places. In fact they do not have to do any work outside their homes and are not expected to earn for the upkeep of the
[562] family. The rich Muslim women observe *purdah*, i.e. they never go out of their house without a veil, and considerations of respectability demand that their sphere of activity should strictly be confined to their houses. The situation is materially different in the case of the 'well-to-do' families, but no generalizations can be made regarding this level as a unit, as the social ideals and standards of different castes differ very widely. In general, however, it may be said that the Brahmin and the Komti, being higher castes and respected people in the village, more or less follow the ideals of the rich and refrain from doing heavy manual labour as well as from all other work traditionally regarded as inferior. This is true also of the Muslims on this level who, because of their urban conceptions of middle-class respectability, think it below their dignity to do any inferior work publicly. The women from the above three groups seek to emulate the examples of the women in rich families. But in the other well-to-do families belonging to the agricultural and occupational castes notions of respectability

1 [NOT WORKING, --ANALYST]